



A Community Services Block Grant Program News Forum

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Happy New Year! --A Note From the CSBG Team

2022 went by so quickly and time seems to continue at hyper speed. As always, thank you all for the "heart" work you do daily. We received several submissions from agencies and partners for this edition and we hope that every agency will continue striving to share valuable success stories that help us stay mission minded and learn from one another. Please take the time to read and congratulate one another. Knowledge, innovation, and affirmation are strong tools in the work we do, and we want to celebrate you along the way. We hope this year brings remarkable things to your agency and community!

Warmest Regards,
--Your CSBG Team

Agency Wins

New and Innovative Program and Service Implementation From Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority



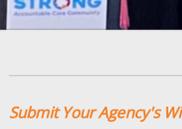
Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority recently implemented a new program that utilizes CSBG funds to help seniors with their property tax payments. The organization's Community Services Program Director was tasked with looking at the CAP Plan and streamlining agency programs while identifying unmet needs in the community and made it a personal goal to move beyond using CSBG funds for "band-aid" type services, and identify more "hand-up" type services--services that really make a long-term difference in the household that moves clients toward self-reliance instead of just offering a temporary fix to a problem.

The first need identified was helping older adults with their property tax payments. Although this need was realized several years ago, now more than ever before, this issue continues to be a huge challenge. There is some assistance through the State of Tennessee for limed tax relief, but it is minimal and still leaves most senior citizens paying an average of \$350- \$500 in property taxes. In some jurisdictions, the cost can be double that amount if residents are required to pay both county and city taxes. In counties around the agency's area, most older community members have a gross monthly income between \$841 to \$1300 and may face the choice of living without basic necessities to pay property taxes.

To support these community members, Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority organization started a "pilot" Property Tax Program. The agency met with the Property Tax Trustee from its largest county and reached an agreement that permits seniors who participate in our Program to use vouchers for tax payments.

The agency is just starting this program, but so excited to see the positive difference it makes in the lives of our most precious vulnerable citizens. The team feels this program can be a key that helps older citizens be self-reliant and able to remain in their own homes where they can thrive without having to choose between important necessities and payments that keep them in their home. If this pilot program is a success, on October 1, 2023, we will implement the program in the other five counties we serve.

UETHDA's Community Services Manager Martha Dixon Receives Strong ACC Resiliency Award



Martha Dixon, Manager of Community Services at the Upper East Tennessee Human Development Agency (UETHDA), was one of three individuals honored with the inaugural 2022 STRONG Accountable Care Community Resiliency Award on September 28, 2022.

Resiliency Award winners are adversity overcomers who secured employment with the help of a STRONG ACC partner organization and used their skills to positively impact their communities and lives of others. Ms. Dixon was nominated by UETHDA Community Services Director Noma Tremblay based on Ms. Dixon's ability to understand and relate to others on a personal level and passionately to see through the potential of others.

"I'm singled Martha because she is the most giving person I have ever met," Director Tremblay said. "She gives 200% every single day. It doesn't matter if it is a Friday evening or a Sunday morning, if Martha hears that someone needs assistance, she is there."

Ms. Dixon first came to UETHDA as a Head Start parent. With the support of the agency and encouragement of colleagues, she began working for Head Start and received her degree in social work. For the last five of her 25 years of service, she worked in the Community Services Department with UETHDA.

"What I love about going to work every day is being able to make a difference for people who are just like me," Dixon said. "I just want to help people in the same way that others have done for me." UETHDA is a part of the Community Action Partnership, headquartered in Kingsport's V.O. Dobbins, Sr. Complex.

For more than 50 years UETHDA has served by providing a variety of assistive programs, such as Head Start, Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and more. To learn more about UETHDA, visit www.Uethda.org.



UETHDA employee Martha Dixon receiving her Strong ACC Award.

Submit Your Agency's Win

Has your agency broken new ground? Our "Agency Wins" column spotlights innovative programs, services, achievements, community awards, and accomplishments from agencies across the state. If there's an activity or agency accomplishment you're proud of, we want to hear from you. Your story can inspire others.

[Submit Your Agency Win](#)

Best Play Book

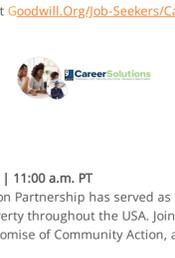
New Disability Benefit Application Process Changes Lives and Ease of Access

The Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) recently made changes that expedite the delivery and application process and allows clients to receive services faster.

"Giving our clients the ability to advocate for themselves and navigate the complexities of the benefit systems is very important to us," said Michelle, CAC's A2B Counselor. "We believe that everyone has the right to assistance in hard times and providing the tools to receive it is a rewarding experience."

Access to Benefits (A2B) and SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) 2021 Statistics:

- 61 individuals served by the Access to Benefits (A2B) program
- 20 individuals had new applications filed on their behalf
- 7 individuals had a hearing filed for them.
- 1 individual had a hear filed on their behalf
- 1 individual received A2B advocacy after filing, having assistance working with the Social Security Administration



Metro Action Commission Helps Moms Become Entrepreneurs

Nashville moms are learning for skills to launch small businesses with the help of Metro Action Commission's IDEA Program -- which stands for Individual Dream Entrepreneurial Academy program.



The eight-week program teaches marketing skills, accounting, legal expertise, social media know-how, and more to parents who have children enrolled in Metro Action Commission's Head Start programs. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Tell Us Your Best Plays!

We want to know what the best practices are for your agency's service delivery/administration or if there is advice you'd like to share with others as they work to serve communities in our state.

[Share a Best Play](#)

Team Highlights

Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee

The Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee (CAC) has been a community cornerstone since 1964. From infants to seniors, the organization serves the most vulnerable throughout Knoxville and Knox County with its neighborhood centers being a centerpiece of the organization's commitment to individuals and families with low incomes. These centers house programs such as Access to Benefits, Steps to Success, and CAC Tutoring.



With an established reputation for being a versatile, resourceful, and forward-thinking committee, CAC understands the importance of taking decisive, effective and caring action during times of crisis. The organization filled 2020/2021 with unprecedented action. The organization provided essential services and remained open when the Shelter at Home Order went into effect. Deciding to operate on-site, CAC quickly reinvented every aspect of service delivery so that staff, volunteers, partners, and clients would be safe despite the pandemic challenge.

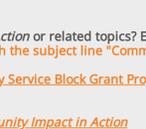
The Numbers Tell the Story

- Through September 2021, CAC Transit provided 161,322 trips, including transit for COVID-19 patients to testing and respite.
- The Mobile Meals Kitchen produced 816,489 meals, including 482,669 home delivered meals. Beardasley Community Farm harvested and distributed 97,057 lbs. of fresh food.
- 426 homeless families were placed in permanent housing.
- Senior Care Calls made 16,764 calls providing a lifeline at a critical time were made.
- LIHEAP utility assistance provided more than \$3.5 million to 7,321 households: 8,931 residents and 274 businesses received utility assistance as part of the CARES program and an initiative with the Knoxville Utility Board (KUB).
- Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program assisted 2,695 with return, adding more than \$5.5 million in refunds to people in need.
- The needs of our clients show the way, the determination of staff, the commitment of volunteers, and generosity of our public and private partners work together to create a network of opportunity that helps people and changes lives.

Happenings in Tennessee

Goodwill Industries Career Solutions Centers Offer Help in Middle Tennessee

Service Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee has 10 Career Solution Centers and a Mobile Career Center that provide free, in-person training programs and career services, including referrals and placement assistance with many employers who are hiring. Virtual and phone services also are available. Appropriate health and safety precautions are being taken in our Career Solutions Centers, as in our stores and other facilities. [Click Here for a list of Career Solution Centers](#) in middle Tennessee or visit [Goodwill/Orj/Job-Seekers/Career-Resources/](#) to find centers in your area.



Community Action 101 Course

Wednesday, February 22, 2023
2:00 p.m. ET | 1:00 p.m. CT | 12:00 Noon MT | 11:00 a.m. PT
For more than 50 years, the Community Action Partnership has served as a dynamic and community-based force in addressing the causes and conditions of poverty throughout the USA. Join the Partnership's CEO, Denise Harlow, as she grounds us in the history, model, and Promise of Community Action, and discusses current opportunities for the Community Action network.

[Click here](#) to register.

The Family Partnership Process: Engaging and Goal-Setting with Families

The Family Partnership Process: Engaging and Goal-Setting with Families guide explores how strong partnerships can positively influence the goals families set in the Family Partnership Process. The guide recommends "Seven Steps for Setting and Reaching Goals with Families" and will help program staff.

- Learn about families and their evolving strengths, goals, orientations, and priorities
- Build trust to establish and maintain positive, goal-oriented relationships
- Engage families in effective goal-setting
- Gain sufficient and meaningful information to complete a Family Partnership Plan

[Click here](#) to access the guide.

Racial Healing Circles at MLTC 2023

Wednesday, February 8, 2023, 2:00-5:00 p.m. CT
We would like to extend the opportunity to the staff and leaders of organizations to join an in-person Racial Healing Circle experience at the Management and Leadership Training Conference (MLTC). Racial Healing Circles have proven to be a useful tool for having difficult conversations about life experiences, perceived differences and creating opportunities for diverse groups of people to connect deeply.

[Sign up at this link.](#)

SAR101 Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) Search Operations-Madison County

Tuesday, February 14, 2023, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. CT
Tennessee Emergency Management Agency West Region Office
1510 70 By-Pass Jackson, TN 38302
This eight-hour awareness level course provides an overview of a typical state supported search operation (non-urban environment).
TLETA POST Certified.
Prerequisites: None
[Click Here to Register](#) or contact Margaret.T.Waters@tn.gov.

H218 HMA (4-hr) Dickson County

Monday, February 27, 2023, 6:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m. CT
Tennessee Emergency Management Agency
284 Cowan Road, Dickson County
This 40-hour resident course covers the basic skills to recognize, detect, and identify the presence of hazardous materials during an emergency. Students will learn how to define and describe how hazardous materials are classified; understand the risk associated with them as well as proper notification procedures. Topics of instruction include: understanding the importance of initiating command and control activities during a hazardous materials incident; surveying a hazardous materials incident; identifying the containment systems and materials involved; and use of the Emergency Response Guidebook.
[Click Here for more information](#) or contact Kathy.Miller@tn.gov.

Share an Upcoming Happening

SH will share information about important CSBG dates as well as future community events, fundraisers and happenings hosted by partner agencies. Events submitted by agencies may also be included on the Tennessee Department of Human Services (TDHS) online calendar located at Tn.Gov/HumanServices/Events.html and TDHS social media pages.

[Share an Upcoming Happening](#)

Ask the Community

Community Impact in Action is meant to not only provide answers from the TDHS CSBG Office but also act as a "crowd-sourcing" forum. This column is an encouragement for agencies to pose questions to both the CSBG team and other agencies. Agency staff members are encouraged to both ask questions and respond directly to questions from other agencies in the "Ask the Community" column.

Have a Questions for the Community?

Have a question for the TDHS CSBG team, want to know how other CSBG members are handling a problem, or are curious about a particular topic?

[Submit a Question to the CSBG Network](#)

Policy Updates You Should Know

CSBG Funding Increase

- \$770 million, this is an increase of \$15 million over FY22 funding.
- Use of 200% FPL remains allowable: for services furnished under the CSBG Act with funds made available for such purpose in this fiscal year and in fiscal year 2022, States may apply the last sentence of section 673(2) of the CSBG Act by substituting "200 percent" for "125 percent."

About Community Impact in Action

Community Impact in Action is a quarterly e-newsletter that connects the Community Service Block Grant (CSBG) network in Tennessee. The newsletter is designed to amplify agency voices across the state and increase communication and peer sharing opportunities. The CSBG network can use this newsletter as a forum to share information with each other and the Tennessee Department of Human Services CSBG team.

Who can make a submission to Community Impact in Action?

Any agency representative can create and submit content for "Agency Wins, The Best Play Book, Ask the Community or Community Events" articles and we look forward to reading and sharing your submissions. However, we strongly recommend that agencies establish an internal approval process for submitting content to Community Impact in Action. TDHS reserves the right to edit content and a representative may contact content contributors for additional information.

When to Make Submissions

Community Impact in Action is published on a quarterly basis (January, April, July, October) and submissions for the next newsletter should be submitted no later than the 15th day of the last month in the quarter. This is especially true for upcoming event submissions. For example, an event scheduled to take place in April, May or June should be submitted no later than March 15th. However, in some cases, events may be shared on the TDHS online event calendar or social media calendar without being shared in the newsletter. These events should be submitted no later than four weeks prior to the event.

Contact

Have questions about *Community Impact in Action* or related topics? Email the Tennessee Department of Human Services CSBG Office at CSBG.DHS@tn.gov with the subject line "Community Impact in Action Newsletter".
[Click Here to learn more about the Community Service Block Grant Program](#) or call 615-313-4892.
[Click Here to read previous editions of Community Impact in Action](#)

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